

registered members of one or more well-known medical bodies, and more or less known to the profession and the people at large. Yet, in the same region, there are several thousand individuals tampering with human life, and there appears to be no law to reach them, not even to protect us against a doctor who was a cobbler a week ago, not to mention the hosts of clairvoyants, spiritualists, Indian, Chinese and herb doctors, whose advertisements are so often found in the *Herald*, and whose misdeeds occasionally appear in the newspapers. These wretches in various ways prey upon the community, and prescribe (!) for the sick, who sometimes recover in spite of the treatment, and when they do not, are quietly buried and the blame laid upon the Lord, "who hath taken them away." It is a common impression that no one but an educated physician can grant a certificate of death; but the fact is that hundreds are annually entombed without being seen by a regular physician. Undertakers are found who will obtain the necessary certificate wherever there is any trouble. As the law now stands, the Board of Health has no means of knowing whether the paper is genuine or not; and the doctor, whose signature is supposed a sufficient guarantee that there has been no foul play is often a myth. Any one can write a death certificate, sign any name, with M. D. attached, and in nine cases out of ten it will pass, for the reason before assigned. A great deal has recently been said with regard to the "Irving Drug law," and though it certainly contains several objectionable features, its object is a good one and a step in the right direction; but is it just toward a druggist, even though he may not be as well informed as could be desired, to drive him from his occupation should he fail to pass a certain examination, while clairvoyants, herb doctors, &c., &c., are allowed to dispense and prescribe medicines, because they style themselves "doctors?" What an appalling condition of things to contemplate, that we may be nearly murdered in a street-car, or blown up by a rotten boiler, only to fall into the hands of some self-styled "doctor," who has never seen the inside of a human being!

Cannot that irresistible power, the Press, induce our law-givers to devise some means for our protection? Here is a glorious opportunity for our numerous aspiring politicians, any of whom might become a public benefactor by a little effort in our behalf. One of the good results of the *Westfield* disaster has been that we are promised that in future no one but an engineer who can produce a certificate (or diploma) of capacity will be allowed to take charge of an engine; and as an earnest of that good time coming one man has been arrested for not having the said parchment. Yet any one without a diploma can take charge of a human life! What an anomalous condition of affairs! Will anything ever arouse the unfortunate denizens of this city from their lethargy?

Respectfully. C. G. S.

New-York, Wednesday, Aug. 23, 1871.

THE "EVIL OF THE AGE."

Notes from the People.

To the Editor of the *New-York Times*:

An article in the *TIMES* of the 23d headed "The Evil of the Age," was read by me, as a physician and a citizen, with much satisfaction. In common with all good and well-informed persons of both sexes, I have deeply lamented the incubus of fœticide, which hangs like a pall over the City of New-York—aye, over our whole land—and anxiously look for the rising storm of popular indignation that should arise and free our city for ever from this curse, attended with more fatality than small-pox, yellow fever, and cholera combined, not taking life alone, but striking deep at moral character—the basis of society. And yet this evil scarcely receives one tithe of attention, but flourishes like a deadly Upas tree in our midst.

It is the great crime of the age. Law affects but little, and is apparently futile to protect the unborn, much less the silly women who place themselves, or are placed by their paramours or seducers in the hands of that fiend or fiends, the abortionist—a curse to every civilized community, (what a travesty upon the word "civilized!") and a stench in the nostrils of all intelligent and thinking people; I wish I could say of all good people. What is the secret of the success of these devils incarnate? Why are they thus permitted to thrive and gloat, vulture-like, over the poor women who seek their dens, lured by specious argument, to hide their shame—yes, to hide their shame. Secrecy and safety is the seductive bait which allures the silly victim. Alas, the secrecy is oftentimes the property of the Press, and the safety a new-dug grave.

But the great reason of the success of the abortionist—who thrives so well—is "public sanction" and countenance. Women, to hide their shame, readily grasp at any opportunity that promises to afford them relief, especially if prompt, secret, and safe. Their paramours or seducers are only too glad to abet any such means, and so long as it is furnished promptly and secretly, they care very little about the safety, except so much of it as affects themselves. The abortionist and the paramour or seducer go hand in hand and are twin brothers. The paramour or seducer furnishes one class of customers; convenience another class. Small families are often considered desirable—many mouths, much bread—the dread, perhaps, of child-birth—the discomfort, perhaps, of the nursing period—the rearing of the child—all these and other similar conditions may be classified under the head of conveniences—in other words, it is not convenient for a pregnant woman to allow her child to be born, and she seeks its destruction, and thus limits her family—injures herself, it may be, and sins against God, and the commonwealth. "Public sanction" protects and feeds abortionism; it is considered desirable and a great "convenience" in high places; and as a convenience, I blush to write it, is introduced into respectable households, and sought for by respectable people at the hands of respectable physicians, who are besought by bribes and entreaties to perform abortion; and it is often with much difficulty people are besought to turn aside, and made to look upon its crime. This condition of things is common to every practitioner in every grade of his professional life, and in every grade of society.

Now, Sir, the remedy for this gigantic evil. You see we have a hydra-headed monster who is supported by society, receiving his nourishment from several sources. It is very certain that a large proportion of women do not look upon fœticide as a criminal offence. They regard abortion as a great convenience. If hedged off and refused, as they invariably are by all honest practitioners, they seek the haunts of the abortionists, who are low, cunning, crafty, but ignorant, men and women. The remedy then is apparent, not difficult; public opinion must be reversed, and public sanction must be withdrawn. The medical faculty, ("with now and then an exception,") have fought this matter single-handed, and legislation has done somewhat, a voice of warning has now and then raised in the pulpit, the Press at long intervals gives a short article. But the resistance has been very irregular, and the evil has rather grown than diminished.

Concentration of effort and union of effort is greatly to be desired. The people have to be taught the enormity of the crime. The evil must be handled without gloves. The ministry, the law and the Press, and all intelligent men and women must unite with the medical faculty in not simply abating, but crushing out this nefarious traffic in blood. A complete revolution of society is demanded. This, with proper legislation, will drive forth the abortionist with the brand of Cain upon his brow, and no man will receive him.

Alas! poor woman's rights are not yet fully understood, nor will not be so long as this and kindred evils flourish. We call upon all women—strong-minded and weak-minded—of all classes of society, especially those whom it is sad to have to remind of their duty; even Christian women, who sit under the ministry, and yet have a "secret sin" to account for, to arise and combat "woman's wrongs," and establish her in the right way. Let the Press turn its argus-eyes toward these slums of iniquity, and inform and warn the public of its dangers. Let the pen of its most accomplished writer depict fœticide in its foul and criminal attitude toward God and man. Let our most brilliant orators hurl anathemas from the pulpit and platform. Thus shall ignorant and deluded women be forced by society to acknowledge their crime, and sin no more, and the abortionist, deprived of his victim, and pursued by law, shall sink back in the pool of corruption which gave him being. I wish to state, before closing this article, that large awards to informers would be the means of bringing before the public much crime that now remains hidden. These abortionists are no doubt surrounded by confederates, who are as treacherous as they are themselves, who, if tempted by sufficiently large awards, would do much to bring their masters or mistresses to justice, and give evidence sufficient to convict them to State Prison, if not the gallows, the crime meted out to baby-farmers in England, and I do not think too good for abortionists in this country.

CIVILIZATION.

To the Editor of the *New-York Times*:

The publication of your excellent and well-timed article upon the "The Evil of the Age," in today's issue, is, indeed, well calculated to arouse public sentiment and the necessity of taking some decided and effectual action upon the subject. In no part of the world are the people so utterly at the mercy of quacks and scoundrels as in this country, and more especially in this City. According to the most reliable authority there are but fifteen hundred and fifty-three regularly educated physicians in this City, Brooklyn, Williamsburg and vicinity, each of whom are